

COUNTY OF YORK

MEMORANDUM

DATE: March 22, 2004 (PC Mtg. 4/14/04)

TO: York County Planning Commission

FROM: Timothy C. Cross, AICP, Principal Planner

SUBJECT: Application No. UP-633-04, Colson and Colson Construction Co.

ISSUE

This application requests an amendment to a previously approved Special Use Permit pursuant to Section 24.1-115(d)(3) of the York County Zoning Ordinance. The original use permit authorized the establishment of a 118-unit senior housing-congregate care facility on an 8.23-acre portion of a 10.4-acre parcel located on Fort Eustis Boulevard (Route 105) approximately 240 feet west of its intersection with Route 17, and further identified as Assessor's Parcel No. 24-63-2. The proposed amendment would allow a driveway connection between the congregate care facility and the entrance on Route 17 that currently serves McDonald's restaurant.

DESCRIPTION

- Property Owner: Memorial Highway Associates (applicant is contract purchaser)
- Location: Fort Eustis Boulevard (Route 105) approximately 600 feet west of its intersection with George Washington Memorial Highway (Route 17)
- Area: 8.2-acre portion of a 10.4-acre parcel
- Frontage: Approximately 770 feet on Fort Eustis Boulevard (Route 105) and Approximately 295 feet on George Washington Memorial Highway (Route 17)
- Utilities: Public water and sewer
- Topography: Flat
- 2015 Land Use Map Designation: General Business
- Zoning Classification: GB – General Business
- Existing Development: None
- Surrounding Development:

North: Clairmont apartment complex (under construction)

East: McDonald's fast food restaurant

South: Veterinary clinic and undeveloped acreage (across Fort Eustis Boulevard)

West: Burnt Bridge Run condominiums

- Proposed Development: Driveway connection between a 118-unit congregate care senior housing facility and an existing off-site entrance on Route 17.

CONSIDERATIONS/CONCLUSIONS

1. In October 2003 the Board of Supervisors adopted Resolution No. R03-169 to approve Application No. UP-622-03, which requested a Special Use Permit to authorize the construction of a 118-unit senior housing-congregate care facility on an 8.23-acre portion of a 10.4-acre parcel located on Fort Eustis Boulevard (Route 105) approximately 240 feet west of its intersection with Route 17. As depicted on the approved conceptual plan for this development, the only access was to be provided by an existing entrance on Fort Eustis Boulevard that was established years ago as a joint entrance to serve all the commercial property in the northwest quadrant of the intersection of Route 17 and Fort Eustis Boulevard. This entrance currently serves only the McDonald's restaurant. Following approval of the Special Use Permit, however, the developer submitted a site plan to the County's Division of Development and Compliance in February 2004 depicting a driveway connection between the congregate care facility and Route 17. (The current property owner is requiring the driveway connection as a condition of selling the 8.23-acre portion to the applicant.) The proposed entrance onto Route 17 constitutes a significant modification to the original proposal; therefore, in accordance with Section 24.1-115(d)(3) of the Zoning Ordinance, it requires review by the Planning Commission and approval of the Board of Supervisors through an amendment to the previously approved use permit.
2. The congregate care facility will be an approximately 39,100-square foot apartment building with a mix of studio, one-bedroom, and two-bedroom units, none with kitchens. Residents will receive three meals daily served in a common dining room, and other amenities include housekeeping, laundry service, private bus transportation, a beauty shop, and various activities. The subject parcel currently has almost 300 feet of frontage on Route 17, and the owner plans to subdivide the property into two parcels, leaving the entire Route 17 frontage to the remaining 2.2 acres that are not part of the congregate care facility. There is an existing entrance to the property from Route 17 that currently provides access to the McDonald's restaurant. The property owner's plan is for this entrance road to be extended 175 feet to connect with the parking lot for the congregate care facility. Ultimately this will result in a network of service roads and driveways by which all three developments – the congregate care facility, McDonald's, and whatever is eventually built on the 2.2-acre residual parcel – will have access to both Route 17 and Fort Eustis Boulevard. There are restricted access easements along both property frontages that will prevent the creation of any additional entrances to the property from either Route 17 or Fort Eustis Boulevard.
3. Just as residential street interconnections provide for safer, more efficient travel between and among adjacent residential subdivisions, so too do internal networks of driveways and service roads facilitate travel between and among different

developments within a commercial area. For example, without the proposed driveway connection, residents of the congregate care facility wishing to access southbound Route 17 would have to either turn left onto Fort Eustis Boulevard, crossing two lanes of oncoming traffic without the benefit of a traffic signal, or take a circuitous route through the McDonald's parking lot. Direct access to Route 17 would make this trip shorter, safer, and more efficient, and it would do so without generating "cut-through" traffic by drivers on Route 17 seeking to avoid the traffic signal at the intersection. The intermingling of such high-speed traffic with elderly drivers in a residential setting could create safety problems; however, staff does not believe that driving through the commercial area to reach Fort Eustis Boulevard would offer any savings in time or convenience (except in the event of a major crash at the intersection). Only drivers turning onto the driveway for other reasons are likely to use this route to access Fort Eustis Boulevard.

4. Although it would provide direct access from the congregate care facility to Route 17, the proposed driveway connection would have a very insignificant impact on traffic volumes, and thus the Level of Service, on Route 17. This is because senior housing developments generate much less traffic per unit than do other types of residential development. According to the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) Trip Generation manual (7th edition), a 118-unit congregate care facility can be expected to generate approximately 250 vehicle trips per day, including 7 in the AM peak hour and 20 in the PM peak hour. This is fewer trips than would be generated by virtually any commercial use (with the possible exception of mini-storage warehouses).

The low traffic generation of the proposed use was an important consideration because of the limited capacity of the intersection that will serve the development. The existing entrance and the entrance directly across the street align with the median break on Fort Eustis Boulevard, forming an unsignalized four-way intersection. The proximity of this intersection to the signalized intersection of Routes 17 and 105, combined with the heavy volume of traffic along this segment of Route 105 and the high number of turning movements, cause congestion in this area, especially during the peak hours. These problems will likely increase with the eventual development of the 13.2 acres of developable GB-zoned land on the south side of Route 105; currently, since the Exxon gas station in the southwest quadrant closed, the only businesses using this intersection are the McDonald's restaurant and the Yorktown Animal Hospital. By providing a direct outlet to Route 17, the proposed driveway connection would take pressure off of this intersection.

5. The Comprehensive Plan designates this area for General Business development while noting that the intersection of Route 17 and Fort Eustis Boulevard could be appropriate for some type of mixed-use development. In reference to this area, the plan states, "This underdeveloped node is designated in the Route 17 Corridor Plan as a potential 'village center.' It is centrally located at the intersection of two major arterial highways. The four quadrants comprising the intersection could lead to future development as a pedestrian-oriented mix of uses anchored by commercial development, some of which is already in place." Although the proposed congregate care facility is basically a residential development, it does have commercial elements

(e.g., deliveries, 25-30 on-site employees), and, with the proximity to McDonald's, it is likely that there will be pedestrian as well as vehicular traffic between the two developments (and possibly with whatever is built on the parcel to be created to the north of McDonald's). The proposed driveway connection would provide for the integration of these developments and thus contribute to the mixed-use character of this area.

6. The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) has indicated that it does not oppose the proposed driveway connection. In addition, in its review of the site plan for the congregate care facility, VDOT expressed concerns about turning movements by elderly drivers at the unsignalized median break on Fort Eustis Boulevard and noted that this intersection cannot be signalized because of its proximity to the signalized intersection at Route 17 and Fort Eustis Boulevard. Direct access to Route 17 would enhance safety at this intersection by reducing the number of turning movements.

RECOMMENDATION

The proposed driveway connection to Route 17 would improve the accessibility of the congregate care facility with little or no impact on the carrying capacity of this major arterial road. It would also reduce the number of turning movements at the unsignalized intersection of Fort Eustis Boulevard and the existing service road/congregate care facility entrance. Moreover, the interconnection of commercial developments in the northwest quadrant of the intersection of Route 17 and Fort Eustis Boulevard would provide for a more efficient traffic pattern, preventing unnecessary vehicular traffic on Route 17 and Fort Eustis Boulevard. It would also contribute to the desired "mixed-use" character for this area called for in the Comprehensive Plan and the Route 17 Corridor Plan. Therefore, based on the considerations and conclusions as noted, staff recommends that the Commission forward this application to the Board of Supervisors with a recommendation of approval through the adoption of proposed Resolution No. PC04-8.

TCC

Attachments

- Zoning Map
- Original (approved) concept plan
- Revised concept plan
- Project narrative submitted by the applicant
- Proposed Resolution No. PC04-8